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ABSTRACT

A case study is presented of a secondary student teacher, focusing on her adaptation to the role of a teacher, and factors that influenced the adaptation process. The student teacher described is one of a growing number of women who are making the decision to become professionals later in life, after having experienced roles such as marriage, parenting, and other jobs. The study was conducted over a 10-week period of student teaching. This student teacher's development as a teacher is traced through changes in her teaching and related changes in the language with which she described her experiences as a student teacher. For example, as the period progressed, she devoted increasing amounts of time to instruction, and talked less about classroom management per se and more about the impact of instruction on order in the class. Her adaptation to the role of a teacher was influenced significantly by the personal resources she had due to her age and life experience. They provided her with the strength to operate according to her own values, even when they differed dramatically from those of her cooperating teacher. This process of development is discussed by drawing on the role theory as well as existing literature on the socialization of teachers. (Author/JD)

FAR WEST LABORATORY
FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

FROM VETERAN PARENT TO NOVICE TEACHER: A Case Study of a Student Teacher

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ABSTRACT

A VETERAN PARENT TO NOVICE TEACHER:
A Case Study of a Student Teacher

This paper presents a case study of a secondary student teacher, focusing on her adaptation to the role of a teacher and factors that influenced the adaptation process. The student teacher described is one of a growing number of women who are making the decision to become professionals later in life, after having experienced roles such as marriage, parenting, and other jobs. The study was conducted over a ten-week period (the term of student teaching), using participant observation augmented by audio and videotaping of selected lessons, reviewing videotapes in interviews to stimulate informant recall, conducting interviews with other student teachers as validating informants, attending the weekly student teacher seminar, and interviewing other teachers, administrators, counselors, and specialists.

This student teacher's development as a teacher is traced through changes in her teaching and related changes in the language with which she described her experiences as a student teacher. For example, as the 10-week period progressed, she devoted increasing amounts of time to instruction, and talked less about classroom management per se and more about the impact of instruction on order in the class. Her adaptation to the role of a teacher was influenced significantly by the personal resources she had due to her age and life experience. They provided her with the strength to operate according to her own values, even when they differed dramatically from those of her cooperating teacher. This process of development will be discussed by drawing on role theory as well as existing literature on the socialization of teachers.

FROM VETERAN PARENT TO NOVICE TEACHER:
A Case Study of a Student Teacher

When is a novice teacher not a novice at teaching? Modern psychologists claim that learners are never blank slates, but return in learning situations to what they know. Too often, however, teacher educators treat teachers-in-training as if they had no relevant prior experience. This is a study of one novice teacher who had taught for many years, not in the school, but at home.

The setting of this ethnographic study was the ten-week term of student teaching. The research attempted to assess the student teacher's sense of the task of student teaching by examining how a student teacher is socialized into the profession of teaching. It was assumed that the intern's perception of the task changes over a period of time. One way to describe the socialization process is to document the change of perspective of student teachers as they progress through their term of student teaching. Howard Becker, who studied changes in the perspective of medical students, says that a perspective contains several elements:

> ...a definition of the situation in which the actors are involved, a statement of the goals they are trying to achieve, a set of ideas specifying what kinds of activities are expedient and proper, and a set of activities or practices congruent with them (Becker et al., 1961, p. 436).

In this ethnographic study I examined how one student teacher and two validating informants were socialized into teaching. I interpreted (a) their interactions with people who influence their perspectives on teaching (university faculty, supervisors, pupils, teachers, other student teachers, family, etc.); (b) responsibilities they assumed that influenced these perspectives; and (c) their

perceptions about the difficulties of student teaching that influenced their perspectives.

Ethnography, literally a picture of the "way of life" of a group of people, is well suited to this kind of research. Erickson (cited in Wolcott, 1980) says that "Ethnography is an inquiry process guided by a point of view that derives from the research setting itself and from the knowledge of prior anthropological research." I used participant observation and interview methods to examine the student teacher's changing sense of the task of student teaching as she progressed through the internship experience. The psychologist's notion of a learner's prior conceptions and the sociologist's conception of an evolving perspective can both be captured by the ethnographer's study of an individual.

Rationale. Despite the multitude of studies on student teaching (see Barnes, 1981 for a good review on research on student teaching), few studies have examined closely how students were socialized during the experience. These researchers (e.g., Iannacone and Button, 1961; Lacey, 1977; Ralston, 1980; deVoss, 1979; Sitter, 1981; and a series of studies by Tabachnik and Zeichner et al, 1979-81 1982, 1984) have provided fairly consistent data on the teaching perspectives of student teachers. In a recent publication, Tabachnik and Zeichner (1984) have summarized the findings from this area of research:

> Generally, these studies indicate that student teaching contributes to the development of instrumental perspectives, where what works in the short run to get the class through the required lesson in a quiet and orderly manner becomes the major criterion for evaluating the teaching activity. Within this perspective, technique of teaching . comes an end in itself rather than a means toward some specified educational purpose (p. 30).

Although these studies have provided important information, they all describe the characteristics of the dominant perspective of the group of students, and neglected to describe the development of a minority of students who did not fit the dominant pattern.

This paper presents a case study of a student teacher who did not fit the dominant pattern of development. It focuses on her adaptation to the role of a teacher and factors that influenced the adaptation process. The student teacher described is one of a growing number of women who are making tne decision to become professionals later in life, after having experienced roles such as marriage, parenting, and other non-teaching occupations. I will argue that her adaptation to the role of a teacher was influenced significantly by the personal resources she possessed due to her age and life experience. They provided her with the strength to operate according to her own values, even when they differed dramatically from those of her cooperating teacher. It is entirely possible for a younger student teacher to exhibit such resilience. I will maintain, however, that for a candidate who is more mature, the teaching "novitiate" can be a very different experience.

Additional case studies are necessary to build up the data base from which teacher education programs are developed. These pictures of the life of a student teacher can help teacher educators provide more relevant instruction and field experiences to prospective teachers.

Methodology

A ninth grade English student teacher, Debbie Newman, (pseudonyms were used throughout this paper) was selected as the primary subject

for this case study. She was recruited from the education foundation class that immediately precedes student teaching. Two other student teachers, placed in sixth grade classrooms, acted as validating informants to avoid the "tyranny of a single case (Erickson, 1977). One kept a daily log and met with the researcher weekly to discuss her experience; the other was visited by the researcher twice a week in a supervisory capacity.

Since the research tool of an ethnography is the researcher, a brief description of this researcher is appropriate. At the time this study was conducted, I was an experienced teacher educator and supervisor in an elementary preparation program at the university where these subjects were recruited. In the spirit of "making the familiar strange," I selected a secondary student teacher as the primary subject for this study. This gave me the advantage of an "insider" as a teacher educator, with the perspective of an "outsider" looking at the transformation of a secondary student teacher in a different program.

Data collection. This ethnography used participant observation and interview techniques as the primary source of data collection. At least one day per week over a ten week term was devoted to gathering data. I tried to generate an "outsider's" description as well as an "insider's" description of what happened from the view of the participants. I gathered field notes on (a) the physical setting of the school and classroom; (b) classroom activities and reactions of participants in the classroom (pupils, cooperating teacher, and student teacher); (c) interactions with Debbie and school personnel in informal contexts like the faculty lounge and lunch room; (d) activities and reactions of other student teachers in their weekly seminar; and (e)

Debbie's reactions to all of the above.

I attempted to use the language of the participants in all the field notes to keep the data accurate. I also kept a record of my reactions to key events to document my bias toward the phenomena. These included frustration while watching the cooperating teacher conduc' what I considered meaningless lessons, and a feeling of helplessness in my inability as a researcher to help Debbie cope with her difficult situation. I asked questions of my informants -- student teachers, teachers, administrators, pupils, and the university supervisor -- to follow up working hypotheses. I also tried to look at the activities in the classroom from several vantage points (e.g., student teacher, pupils, cooperating teacher, and my own expertise as a university supervisor).

To triangulate, data were gathered through (a) structured and informal interviews with the subject and other school personnel, (b) examination of classroom handouts and assignments, and (c) perusal of unit plans and other documents which might pertain to the study. Audio tapes were used during several class sessions throughout the term to insure accuracy of field notes. A videotape of three classes, made during the eighth week, was used for stimulated recall purposes.

Data Analysis. As described above, analysis began during data collection; working hypotheses were generated and checked throughout the term. After the data were collected, transcripts were examined several times, and recurring themes were identified for content analysis. Transcripts were then copied, so the researcher could manipulate the data. Pertinent data were categorized and separated according to each theme. Assertions were then developed and checked for validity by seeking confirming evidence as well as disconfirming

evidence.

I looked for changes in the language of the student teacher to get a sense of her changing perspective as she progressed through the term (see Table 1, p.10). I also sought changes in the distribution of classroom activities (e.g., seatwork and instruction) over a two-month period of one English class (see Table 2, p.28).

Subjects

The main character of this study was Debbie Newman, an attractive 32 year old, married woman who lived with her husband and son in a small suburb of Naperville. Debbie was the oldest of three children. Her father died when she was 11; thus, she was suddenly forced to help bring up her two brothers with her mother. She began to have trouble after her father died and did not do well academically in high school. She remembered two good teachers. One was a black gym teacher who encouraged her, set high expectations, and placed her on the cheerleading squad. The second was a Spanish teacher. Even though Debbie failed the class, the teacher told her she had potential and should take Spanish in college.

Debbie was married twelve years before this study was conducted; she had one ten year old son. Several years after her son's birth, she began her post-high school education at a local community college. After completing a two year program, she took a job working with problem adolescents at a learning laboratory in a local high school. During this period, she realized that she worked well with youngsters, and decided to seek a high school teaching certificate. For the past two years, she had been at the university full time. In describing how this has changed her life, she said:

> It's been real good for me and my family because I was never happy just being at home. I had always worked, but was never happy because I never had a real goal. It's nice to have other people working around you for a change. We all work together as a family and get the work done--not for me, but because the work must get done (First Interview, 1/4/82).

Debbie felt the strengths she brought to teaching were a sensitivity to and perceptiveness of other people. "I have a great rapport with kids. I really like them and they know it. I respect them, demand it in return, and get it" (Interview, 1/4/82). She felt competent to teach English, but had limited experience in providing clear explanations of new ideas.

Debbie was ambivalent about her student teaching experience. She said that she was tired of "learning" and was ready for her own class. She had heard that student teaching was great and a lot of hard work...but it depended on your cooperating teacher.

Kathy Cathcart was Debbie's cooperating teacher. She had taught ninth grade English for 10 years and described herself as a very traditional teacher whose primary objective was to teach grammar. She reported that during the first few years, she was an idealistic teacher who spent hours developing interesting lessons; however, the administration and student apathy caused her to revert to the model of a traditional teacher that the nuns of her own educational background provided. At this point in her career, she was only interested in teaching grammar to get the job done. Student problems were referred to other school personnel (Interview, 1/7/82; and Field Notes of a colleague whose ethnographic study was on Ms. Cathcart's classroom).

The two validating informants were placed in sixth grade classrooms. Jill Goldberg, a 22 year old woman, had completed two and one-half years of successful pre-internship experiences and was looking

forward to completing her internship with a team of two highly competent teachers. I was Jill's current university supervisor and observed her teach at least three hours per week.

Maureen O'Connell, a previous student in my children's literature class, was also 22 years of age. Like Jill, she had completed a part-time pre-internship as a junior. Maureen had previously met her cooperating teacher and was confident that she would have a rewarding experience.

These three student teachers may not be typical of those reported in the literature. All three had some previous experience teaching children--Maureen and Jill as student teachers, and Debbie as an aide in a learning laboratory. Moreover, Debbie was a somewhat older student and a parent, less typical of most students in teacher preparation programs.

Site

The setting for this research was a ninth grade English class in a large junior high school in Naperville, a middle sized city in Michigan. The eleven year old school had 500 students in each grade level, a total of 1500 students. The school drew from a mixed ethnic population with lower to middle income economic backgrounds. Many families were unemployed due to a recession in the automobile industry.

Room 27 was a large classroom with rows of desks. The front and back walls were covered with a blackboard and small bulletin boards. One bulletin board displayed a "Happy Valentine" sign with several valentines scattered around it; the other was bare. On the front blackboard was a list of 15 vocabulary words and a schedule of the day's activities. A teacher's desk and podium was placed in front of

the blackboard. To the left of the desk stood a rectangular table with floor-to-ceiling bookshelves behind it. Old dictionaries, textbooks, Readers' Digest Skill Builders, and old magazines including People and Sports Illustrated, rested on the shelves. To the left of these shelves were two filing cabinets containing folders of classroom materials and other miscellaneous files. A double study carrel stood in the back corner. All the walls in the room were bare. The door was usually locked while class was in session. Posters covered a floor to ceiling window next to the door, so that one could not look into or out of the classroom while the door was closed.

Ninth grade English classes consisted of approximately 30 students. As far as I could tell, there was no specific curriculum for this class. The cooperating teacher said that most ninth grade English teachers were teaching grammar. However, teachers were free to teach novels and written composition if they desired.

Debbie taught four English classes and one history class. Her day began with a planning period followed by two English classes, a split history class (lunch was in the middle of fourth hour), and two more English classes. Her most difficult class, fifth hour English, occurred soon after lunch. Debbie's experience teaching English will be the focus of this paper.

Findings

Debbie's perspective on teaching changed as she progressed through the term of student teaching. Table 1 highlights these changes with excerpts from weekly interviews. During the first month she was both bored and discouraged in her role as an aide to her cooperating teacher, whom she criticized. When she assumed the role of teacher

Table 1

Changes Over Time in Terms Used by
Debbie to Describe her Student Teaching Experience

1/4/82
Boring, painful

1/7/82
Didn't enjoy it if that's what you mean.

1/21/82
Role is ambiguous. When I'm doing my own plans, I'll be more enthusiastic. It's something I will want to do...It's so boring I don't blame the kids for acting like that. I'm bored...if I'm bored, so are they...I hate to punish them for poor behavior. It's not their fault.

1/26/82
I feel the main thing I have to do in there is control.

2/2/82 (first day teaching)
Feel much better. Class ran smoothly. Kids knew there was a transition...they were good. I just hope it lasts.

2/8/82 (bomb)
I feel as if I'm just winging it. I'm stuck in my writing unit... depressed, discouraged.

2/16/82
Class was mediocre...well, ok, but it didn't last long enough. I passed out three things, and it still didn't last the whole hour.

2/23/82
I really feel good about my lessons. I like it...and my situation. I actually look forward to coming, can you believe it? I'm disappointed in myself for trying Kathy's system.

3/3/82
I'm not uptight about it now that I know I'm on the right track. I go to class relaxed.

3/9/82
I have found what works for me. Management and lessons are related. I feel like I have finally gotten things together.

3/20/82 (final paper)
One of my major breakthroughs dealt with the realization that structured, concrete and detailed lesson plans are essential to classroom control.

4/16/82 (final interview, looking back on experience)
The whole thing was kind of a disaster...not real successful.

(fourth week), she expressed concerns about discipline and planning lessons that would last the entire period. By the eighth week she felt good about her teaching and her situation. She began to realize what all good teachers know: carefully planned units, with highly crafted presentations and interesting application activities, are the keys to a well-managed and successful interactive learning environment.

These findings are organized into the following sections:

(a) Observer Role -- First Month Blahs

(b) Active Role of Teaching

(1) Trial and Error

(2) Consolidation and Integration

The titles for the first two sections stem from Iannaccone and Button's (1964) differentiation between the observer role and the active role of teaching. Students evaluate their student teaching experience in relation to their teaching time. Students who assume the teaching role early in their internships are enthusiastic and feel they are learning from their experience (Iannaccone and Button, 1964; Ralston, 1980). On the other hand dents who remain observers, or merely correct papers, reme mall groups, and answer student questions, are frustrated and discouraged. Debbie "observed" for a month and was indeed fru trated. Her experience will be compared to the two validating informants, who began to teach early in their internship.

The second section, the active role of teaching, uses Sacks and Reimer's (1982) theoretical description of the stages through which student teachers proceed as they learn to teach. At first, students go through a period of trial and error, struggling to find the "right" way to teach, to manage the class, and to assert their

independence and autonomy in the classroom. As new teachers they look for guidance because they lack self-confidence in their teaching ability. Often they feel satisfied with just being able to "get through lessons." They take risks and try new techniques, only to fall back to practiced behaviors when immediate effectiveness is not perceived. At time they feel they are unable to handle the complexity they see in that role. A few students enter a stage of integration before leaving their internship. During this stage, student teachers experience more consistent effectiveness. They are able to evaluate their own performance, set realistic goals, and focus their attention on student needs rather than their own. The result is a growing sense of self-confidence and satisfaction.

Debbie was one of those few students who were able to transcend the painful period of trial and error and achieve consolidation and integration. This section describes how she accomplished this feat. The two validating informants also went through this process; however it is beyond the scope of this paper to retell their stories.

Observer Role -- First Month Blahs

Debbie's lack of enthusiasm was obvious after the first two days of student teaching. In our first interview at the beginning of the term, she stated:

> The teacher is nice...fair. But she only teaches grammar and vocabulary, and it's so boring. I don't know how the kids do so well. She doesn't want me to teach until February 1, when the new semester begins. All I am supposed to do is correct papers and work with a few kids, and I have done that already. It' a drag (Interview, 1/4/82).

Debbie's frustration in the observer role was exacerbated because she was critical of the teacher's instructional and management

techniques. This lack of enthusiasm, which occasionally led to depression, continued until she adopted the teacher role a month later.

Unclear Expectations. Debbie's frustration in the observer role was increased because she did not know the expectations of the faculty, cooperating teacher, or supervisor about how she should act as a student teacher. Debbie had assumed she would be able to begin teaching a unit of her choice to the whole group near the beginning of her internship, but discovered to her dismay that she would have to assist her cooperating teacher for a month. Knowing that a few student teachers in the building began teaching immediately only aggravated her situation. She subtley voiced this concern to her supervisor during the first seminar: "I don't know what is expected of me...every period. It's kind of a drag, boring really" (Interview, January 7). Velma (the supervisor) responded that she should work it out with Ms. Cathcart and went on to another topic. At that point Debbie realized that the supervisor, a member of the school staff who had released time for supervision, would not intervene. Debbie also wondered what the university requirements for the term were. She thought they were extensive, and it bothered her that no one had stated them precisely. In a phone conversation at the end of the first week, she said, "I still don't know what the university requirements are...there are so many. I am used to having everything written out...but I guess I will have to bide my time" (January 11).

During the second week, my analytic field notes described a very discouraged young woman. Debbie wanted to do a good job in her internship, but was unsure about how she should act. She decided that Velma, her supervisor, was not a credible resource because she was a

member of the school faculty and would defend her colleagues. Debbie felt isolated with her problems, but decided to bide her time and "play the game" of doing what is "right". This feeling was the same for Becker's (1964) medical students and some of Ralston's (1980) student teachers.

The beginning of the third week found Debbie still ambivalent about her role in the classroom. She felt uncomfortable and angry with Kathy's grammar lessons and ineffective authoritarian management techniques, and was puzzled about how much responsibility Kathy expected her to assume in disciplining students for socially poor behavior. Debbie's discomfort peaked during the second half of one grammar lesson:

> While Ms. Cathcart sat at the back of the room, Debbie walked around helping individual students. Several students began to talk to each other. Neither Ms. Cathcart nor Debbie said anything as the noise level became louder. At 10:40 Debbie yelled, "If you guys all want zeros on your test tomorrow..." Students quieted down for two minutes, but began to talk to each other again two minutes later. Debbie walked to where Ms. Cathcart was sitting and asked if there was extra work to give to students who were finished with their ditto. Ms. Cathcart said that she had nothing else to give them. Debbie suggested to one girl to get a magazine, but the girl said that they were all boring. The noise level continued to rise, but neither teacher said anything. At 11:05 only five students out of 30 were quiet. A minute later class was dismissed. After class Ms. Cathcart told Debbie that she "did not want to interfere, but I would have given six points to a couple of kids. It's not really fair, because there were more trouble makers, but that's how the kids know you mean business" (Field Notes, 1/11/82).

Debbie felt terrible about the class. She said she "blew it" but did not blame the kids for being noisy. "It was boring and there wasn't enough to do." She also had not known whose responsibility it was to discipline the students, but she was tired of "empty threats." She said, "I feel that I must establish discipline first. But there are conflicting expectations about what I would do...and what is good

for me" (Field Notes, 1/26/82). The following day, Debbie talked to Kathy about management procedures and set strict guidelines with the students. She tried to adhere to these restrictions until she assumed the teacher role.

My two validating informants did not experience Debbie's problems. By the end of the first week, both informants had taught a few lessons and felt that their teachers were credible models. Expectations of the cooperating teachers and the university were generally clearly delineated at the beginning of the term, and the student teachers were pleased with the definition of their roles.

The concepts of role and role conflict will be discussed in the final section of this paper. For now, it is sufficient to state that these concepts were more central to an understanding of the changing perspective of student teachers than I had imagined at the beginning of this study.

Active Role of Teaching

At the fourth week of the term, Ms. Cathcart fulfilled her promise; she gave Debbie complete freedom to plan and teach her own lessons for the rest of the term. She reported that she trusted Debbie's ability to teach, and she would remain an observer. (In fact, Ms. Cathcart used the opportunity to relax in the teachers' lounge, while Debbie taught three of her English classes.)

Trial and Error. During the first few weeks as a new teacher, Debbie went through a three week period of trial and error. These were tough times. She wanted to try new teaching strategies that differed from Ms. Cathcart's, but lacked confidence in her ability to plan and control students. Her primary concerns were that the class

ran smoothly and the lessons lasted the whole hour. As she took risks and provided new writing experiences, some classes responded negatively, and in one class, with hostility. Debbie's confidence as a teacher plummeted, and she described herself as "just winging it."

Debbie's first day as teacher went smoothly. She had looked forward to this day for a month and had planned it very carefully. To separate her image from that of Ms. Cathcart and to establish her own authority, she changed the physical arrangement of the room. Students had been told that Debbie would be the teacher for the new marking period, so they were not surprised to see her in front of the room (which was set up in a different direction). They seemed receptive to Debbie's authority and new seating arrangement, which I inferred from the consideration they showed their new teacher. Debbie's lesson plan involved the weekly vocabulary assignment, the only specified requirement Ms. Cathcart had set for the six weeks.

Debbie's presentation of her first lesson was rather safe. Like Ms. Cathcart, she briefly presented the vocabulary words written on the board, and asked the students to write sentences with each word. The students immediately took out a piece of paper and worked quietly for the rest of the hour. Except for two minor disturbances by boys whispering to each other, the class proceeded without a problem. When students finished their work early, they received an extra-credit ditto, a change from the previous week when there was no additional work for students who finished early.

I was shocked at the students' cooperative behavior. I had not previously observed such a responsible class in this room. I wondered if the students were particularly considerate to Debbie on her

first day. Debbie seemed pleased with her first day and said, "They were good. I hope it lasts" (i.e., the students were controlled).

As it turned out, my hypothesis about student cooperation seemed correct. By the second week Debbie had switched from the routine of grammar dittos and had assigned unfamiliar writing assignments. She reported that students had reacted poorly, and she was experiencing management problems.

On the day that I observed, she had planned to discuss some of the students' writing from the previous day. Again, students reacted negatively, sometimes with hostility, and management problems erupted. Each class reacted poorly, but the fifth hour, her most difficult class, was the worst. Debbie and I labeled this class the "bomb." She resorted to some of Ms. Cathcart's management techniques, which did not work. The following are excerpts from my field notes and a tape-recording of the class session. Student comments are in parentheses:

> Appearing tired from the apparent failures of the previous two classes, Debbie began the class in a monotone voice. "We will have a discussion on your writing you did last week. You will get a check plus if you participate and a check minus if you do not. I will read some of your papers, but no one will know who did the writing. Most of your papers were really short. They're not interesting. People won't want to read them." She passed out dittoed copies of fifteen samples of student paragraphs and proceeded to comment on each of them. Examples of her primarily negative comments were these:
>
> (par. 1) He doesn't explain his reasons very well...it's kind of repetitive...someone may not know what "cuts" means. (Many students disagreed--they maintained that it was obvious.)
>
> (par. 2) What's this paragraph about? He doesn't say anything about Joe and Sue. (Yes he does--that's his friends.) Are they? Maybe they are a horse and dog. (Several students argued against this.)
>
> (par. 4) What I liked about this paragraph is "how she always comes through with a smile and a hug." (few yawns)
>
> (par. 5) What about that sentence? That's...um...unnecessary information. (No, it isn't.) You should stick to one idea in

a paragraph.

(par. 7) There's not enough details here. (You don't need so many details.) Yes, you do. (That would take five years.)

At this point many students argued with Debbie about details and were laughing together. Without warning, Debbie said, "Jeff, I am calling your mother." Jeff argued that she never warned him, but Debbie sent him to the office. The talking stopped until Debbie quickly finished reading the paragraphs and read the assignment sheet. When she told the students to begin work, they began to talk again. After three minutes she moved up the first assignment, and some students were angry. A few asked for quiet, but others continued to talk. The last ten minutes of class were a re zoo. Debbie did not try to restore order, but wrote several es of students on a sheet of paper and said that she would call their mothers. However, by that time no one was responding to her. After one student asked for an example of "ensing" from the assignment, Debbie responded, "I sense that people are angry at me." One boy answered, "You said it, lady." When the bell finally rang, she came over to me and said, "If all my classes were like this one, I'd quit" (Field Notes, 2/2/82).

Debbie was devastated after this class. I asked if she wanted to come to my house to discuss it, and she quickly agreed. We spent an hour talking about possible alternative lessons. She read my field notes for the first time during the study and disagreed with a theoretical notation that the lessons were possibly vague and not relevant to the students. She argued that peer pressure prevented some students from attending to her instruction, and blamed the students and the school for their poor behavior. Debbie left discouraged and did not know what she would do.

Four days later I called Debbie to ask how things were going. She said that she had analyzed the situation and decided that the students were right to react poorly. The lessons were vague and she was planning new ones for the following week. Meanwhile, she had established new rules in the classroom and was "surviving" (Phone Conversation, 2/12/82).

The "bomb" was the first class I had observed where Debbie tried

instruction and discussion rather than merely giving an established assignment. This was a risk, because Ms. Cathcart had never broken the routine of grammar and vocabulary dittos, and had never provided instruction on new material. Thus, Debbie had no immediate model for what kind of instruction was appropriate, nor how to conduct a meaningful discussion. In fact, she had a negative model because she had been told that discussions would not work in this class.

By the next week Debbie's lessons were beginning to be more successful. Students orally read a powerful short story (excerpt from Black Boy, by Richard Wright) and analyzed the elements of literature. She provided an excellent dittoed outline of the elements of the story; the students analyzed the story according to the elements and filled in the outline. Debbie retreated from discussing the emotions of the story (which I felt was needed because of the strong content) because she lacked confidence in her discussion skills after the "bomb." However, she did interact minimally with students during her presentation of the elements of literature. She had learned that discussions work best for her when students have "something to hang on to" (Fields Notes, 2/26/82). Debbie's reaction to the lesson was that it was "mediocre...okay...it still didn't last the whole hour...I feel like I'm spoon-feeding the students when I tell them everything." I mentioned that some educators would call this instruction; she nodded. (Interview, 2/26/82).

Integration and Consolidation. During the last three weeks of the term, Debbie began to enjoy teaching. With some help from Ms. Cathcart, she set realistic goals, planned relevant lessons, and created the kind of learning environment that worked for her and her

students. From continued successful lessons, judged by positive student responses and written assignments, Debbie's confidence in her teaching competence returned.

Table 2 shows the changes in distribution of classroom activities over the term of student teaching in one English class. We can see that the socializing among students decreased markedly when Debbie assumed leadership. Whereas Ms. Cathcart provided no direct instruction (Rosenshine, 1983) during her lessons, Debbie began to provide direct instruction by the second week as teacher. Moreover, seatwork occupied most of the students' time in Ms. Cathcart's classes; by the end of the term, Debbie appears to have achieved a nice balance between instruction and seatwork. Debbie realized that good instruction, teamed with appropriate application activities was the key to an organized classroom conducive to learning.

As I analyzed these changes in the distribution of classroom activity, I realized that I had been profoundly influenced by conceptions of direct instruction. I was using these as part of my own perspective as I questioned why some classes were successful, and others were not. I judged that when the teaching was active, so was the learning; when the teaching was passive, the learning was passive.

I videotaped three class sessions during my visit in the eighth week. Again, Debbie structured the lesson around a powerful reading (excerpt from Black Boy), and provided excellent instruction on the analysis of the story. She also structured writing assignments which provided opportunities for success. The results were many: (a) students maintained attention during class; (b) they produced writing that was much better than she had dreamed possible; (c) she experimented with

TABLE 2.

Changes in Proportion of Classroom Activities
over a Two-Month Period During Third Hour English Class

Role of Student Teacher	AIDE		TEACHER					
Date	1/7	1/21	2/2	2/8	2/16	2/23	3/3	3/9
Instruction	0	0	0	60 RST	20 RST	30 RST	0	40 RST
Seatwork	65 A	60 A	85 E	20 AF	60 BCD	30 A,F	80 CD	40 A
Socializing	20	25	5	10*	5	0	5	8
Other	15 N	15 N	10 N	10 N	15 N	40 MN	15 N	12 N

Seatwork

A Dittos
B Oral Reading
C Tests
D Study Time
E Vocabulary Exercises
F Writing Composition

Instruction

R Direct Instruction
S Discussion
T Practice (as Group)

Other

M Administrivia
N Library Research

* several students, not the whole group

management techniques that required no yelling; and (d) she felt good about what she was accomplishing. The following vignettes during fifth hour demonstrate this:

> When the bell rang the students went to their seats and continued talking to each other as Debbie took attendance. The noise level diminished when Debbie walked to the first person in each row to distribute the class assignment. This signaled that class had begun. Students stopped talking to read the handout. When some students began to talk, a couple of boys said "sh" and the class quieted down again. (This peer pressure to help get class attention had not been evident the previous week.) Debbie walked back to the center of the room and said that they were going to do some writing on the previous story. First, however, to provide a transition from the previous class, she asked the students to summarize the story. Several students participated with raised hands, and it was clear from their responses that they liked the story. Debbie initially called on Mike to begin. After his summary, she asked, "Why were they playing that game?" When several students began to answer at once, one boy said, "She called on Mike" (another example of peer pressure that took the responsibility for attention away from Debbie). Mike was then able to answer the question in an orderly fashion (Field Notes, 2/23/82)

This vignette demonstrates a marked changed in the social order of the class. Whereas in previous classes, Debbie was the sole causal agent of control, in this class the students and Debbie collectively shared the responsibility of order. The next vignette shows Debbie conducting a discussion using new management techniques for maintaining decorum:

> To get the class started with ideas for their papers, Debbie walked to the board and asked the class for some ideas of how Tigo, one of the characters in the story, might have felt. As students shouted out descriptive terms, Debbie wrote them on the board. Many students laughed and were drawn into animated discussions of the story. When the noise level became too loud, she stood quietly and waited for the class to quiet down. This strategy consistently worked and she never yelled. At one point she said, "Excuse me, I can't hear," and asked for raised hands. This was also successful, and she only called on those who raised their hands. After three minutes she asked for suggestions of different endings to the story. The same management techniques were used during this discussion, which was also lively. Debbie added some ideas of her own to give students the greatest possibility of achieving success in their

> writing. After the students completed the assignment, Debbie collected the papers and read them aloud. Both she and the students were impressed, and possibly surprised, at the high quality of writing. Occasionally, Debbie looked up and commented, "These are good, aren't they?" Several students nodded, and one said, "Read more!" The bell rang before she was able to read all the papers... After class Debbie said, "I really feel good about my lessons. I like it... and my situation. I actually look forward to coming; can you believe it? I'm disappointed in myself for trying Kathy's system (Field Notes, 2/23/82).

Debbie was pleased with the discussion and felt in complete control, even when she occasionally had to wait for quiet. Moreover, students responded well to her presentation and were active in the discussion.

She looked forward to coming to my house after school to view the videotape. After watching herself for a few minutes, she said, "This is interesting. I look boring; it's not me yet. I talk in a monotone. I guess I'm still a little uptight." A little later she saw one boy yell, "Quiet, I want to hear!" and noted, "What I really like is when they start "shushing up" other kids. They're doing that in all my classes and are beginning to share the responsibility for their learning." When the videotape was over, she sat back and said, "You know, fifth hour was as good as the other classes. What this class needs is for someone to stand up there, talk quietly, and treat them with respect." We talked for a while, and Debbie thanked me for videotaping. She said that it gave her confidence that she was on the right track (Recall, 2/23/82).

Debbie reported that she felt good about herself throughout the rest of the term. She continued to provide structured practice in writing, which culminated in students' writing their own short stories. I felt that her first presentation to help the students write their own stories was exceptional. They had previously practiced analyzing the components of short stories several times and had written short

segments. Now they were asked to write a complete story. Instead of merely telling them to write a story, however, like many ineffective teachers, she structured their story outlines with a ditto. In addition, the students practiced the strategy by creating a class story according to the outline. Again, the class discussion was animated, but controlled; students were better equipped to write their own stories because they knew what they were supposed to do. Debbie said that she was really pleased with their finished products (Interview, 4/16/82).

By the end of the term Debbie realized that management and good lessons are related. In a structured interview, Debbie looked back on her change of perspective on teaching since the beginning of the year and said:

> It's changed because I realized that what I was doing was not working. There was no purpose. My purpose was for the kids to write better, which was vague. I was their only audience, and they didn't know me from Adam. How could they know what I expected? It was way too abstract for those reasons. I had no clear-cut criteria and really didn't tell them what I was looking for. I just told them to write. I tried to tell them to use more detail and be more specific, but they didn't understand what that meant. And there was no clear steps toward a goal either in my mind, so it also wasn't in their mind. I think that the major thing was that I...major problem I was having was the discipline and management, and it all goes back to your lessons. It must be built right in, and it wasn't, so things just sort of fell apart (Interview, 2/25/82).

Debbie learned that the components of successful lessons are a consensus between pupils and teachers regarding appropriate behavior in class and good instruction. When there is no consensus on classroom management and no instruction, lessons are ineffective.

By the end of the term, I felt that Debbie had the potential to be an excellent teacher. She demonstrated that she could provide

effective instruction and the necessary experiences for student success. She also had the ability to assess her effectiveness by analyzing students' verbal and non-verbal responses as well as their work. When she "bombed," she blamed herself, not the students, and proceeded to change her instruction.

A month after the term was over, I told Debbie that I thought she was a super teacher and asked if she could reconstruct how she accomplished this feat. She was surprised and responded haltingly:

> That's really good to hear, Judy, because if you hadn't been there, too... I mean I still wouldn't be real sure if it was... I mean, I didn't feel that good about it now that it is in the past, but it helps me to know that I was on the right track anyway, so that it doesn't make it a complete bad thing... and I really could not (pause) think of anywhere, even at East Lansing and with the teachers I worked with there except for Jo (pause)... I mean, I know instinctively more than they did... and I really don't think what I've learned in college has helped me... you know... 90% of what I know about teaching is just sort of what I figured out or what I perceived to be right, and 10%...oh, maybe where to get resources and, you know, how (pause) schools operate a little bit (Final Interview, 4/16/82).

As I listened to Debbie talk, I wondered what was wrong with our teacher educational system--here was a student who was potentially an exceptional teacher, and she did not even realize that she was good. She knew that she had some successes and was particularly pleased with the students' final papers, but described the whole experience as "kind of a disaster." While reminiscing about the last few days, Debbie described how angry she felt when Ms. Cathcart took over the last three days. "She went right back to her grammar, and I felt sick" (Final Interview, 4/16/82). Ms. Cathcart never thanked her nor told her that she had performed well. Some of the students caught her in the hall, however, and said that she was great and they missed her. One boy said, "Mrs. Newman, I wish I had a lot of money so I could take you out to

dinner. You're the best teacher I ever had." That was meaningful and took away some of the hurt from not being praised by her cooperating teacher.

In summary, Debbie did progress through a period of trial and error before she discovered what worked best for her. My validating informants also went through this process, experiencing some of the same frustrations as Debbie.

Discussion

The purpose of this study, which used participant observation and interview methods, was to describe the changes in student perspectives about learning to teach. These perspectives develop from interactions with others in formal and informal contexts throughout the term of student teaching. There is a surprising lack of descriptive data such as these, that provide a knowledge base for teacher education programs.

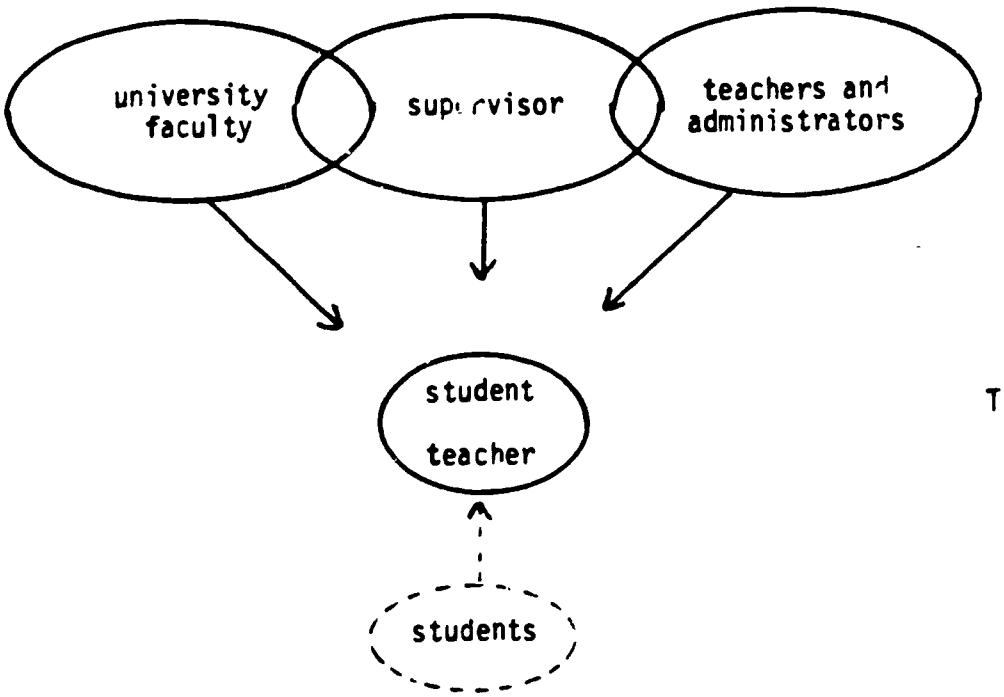
My findings support Ziechner's (1984) position on student teacher socialization as a "negotiated and interactive process where what students bring to the experience gives direction to, but to but does not totally determine the outcome of the socialization process" (p. 34). Debbie's teaching perspective did not change after she finished her student teaching perspective; rather it developed and grew in a direction consistent with the "latent culture (Lortie, 1975) that she brought to the experience. During the first month of student teaching, as an aid to Ms. Cathcart, she employed what Lacey (1977) has referred to as "strategic compliance." She reacted strongly against the constraints posed by her placement with Ms. Cathcart; however, because of her status as a student teacher, she acted in ways demanded of the situation while maintaining private reservations about doing so.

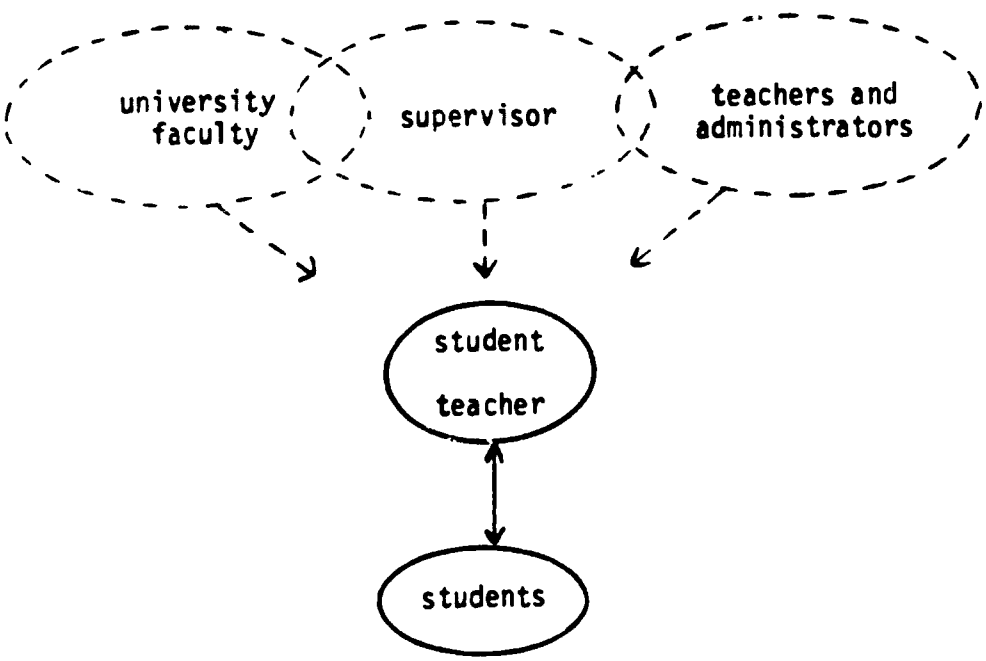
This reaction is similar to that of medical student in Becker's (1961) study.

The complementary concepts of role and socialization can explain how a student teacher learns some of the important aspects of teaching. The word "role" is borrowed from the theatre. "A role in a play exists independently of any particular actor and a social role has also a reality that transcends the individual performer" (Brown, 1965, p. 152). Actors are human beings who interpret the role according to a prescribed script. Teacher is a role within a society. The role "teacher" carries with it a certain set of expectations of how a teacher ought to behave. This definition will survive those who perform the role. Conflict arises when the person who assumes the teacher role behaves in a manner inconsistent with the expectations.

Roles can also be conceived of as sets of norms, and norms can be conceived of as prescriptions for behavior. Problems arise for the occupant of a role when the prescriptions disagree. Likewise, problems can arise for a student teacher if her interpretation of the role is different from the interpretation of her superiors.

Debbie's difficulty in the observer role was exacerbated by a conflict in the prescriptions of the role by her supervisors and her students (refer to Figure 1). As an aide, the dominant influences on Debbie's perspective on teaching were teachers and administrators of the school, her university supervisor, and the university faculty from whom she had courses. (This supervisor intersected with both the university faculty and the set of teachers and administrators, because she was a member of the faculty hired by the university to supervise student teachers.) The subordinate influences were from her students,





ROLE CONFLICT

Figure 1.

over whom she had no control. The prescriptions from each of these role sets were in conflict. The university faculty, with whom she studied during her course work, epitomized the goals of education and used the ideal teachers as the framework for their instruction. They defined the ideal teacher as one who plans and implements good instruction. When Debbie came to the public school to teach, she found that the teachers primarily discussed good teaching in terms of management and discipline of students in their classrooms. There was an apparent consensus between students and teachers about the way classrooms operate; Ms. Cathcart taught grammar, and students responded by filling out dittos and taking tests. However, in Debbie's view, the consensus was not educative; i.e., it did not promote the proper goals of English teaching.

When Debbie assumed the role of teacher, she wanted to create a new consensus that would foster educative relationships among teachers and students rather than merely a management oriented truce. Ms. Cathcart's goal was not education, but rather compliance. Debbie's goal was student learning -- an understanding and appreciation of literature and an increased ability to express those understandings and feelings in writing. While struggling to create appropriate lessons to achieve her goals, she progressed through a period of trial and error before discovering what worked best for her and her students. When Debbie's initial instruction "bombed," she analyzed the students' negative responses and decided that their reactions were appropriate. They had expected that she would provide meaningful instruction, but instead her lessons were vague and without a purpose; the students reacted accordingly. Debbie then proceeded to change her instruction

to suit their needs. When her new lessons were greeted with positive responses from the students and their written work improved, a new consensus emerged. Students began to assume responsibility for their own learning and participated in establishing a new management structure. Whereas previously Debbie was the sole causal agent of control in the classroom, now she and her students collectively shared the responsibility for social order. As successful lessons continued, Debbie realized that good instruction and management were related. One cannot create environments where students share the responsibility for their own learning without providing meaningful instruction. Thus, while Debbie was acting in the role of the teacher, she mediated the prescriptions of each of the role sets and was dominantly influenced by the students.

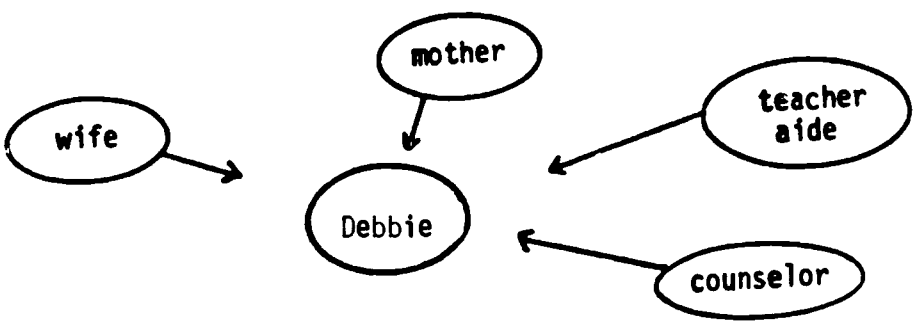
Debbie's success in changing the interpretation of the role of teacher was different from that of the student teachers reported in the literature (Iannaccone & Button, 1965; Ralston, 1980; deVoss, 1979). These student teachers were quick to criticize their cooperating teachers while they were in the observer role; however, they maintained that their teachers' behavior was appropriate after they began to teach. What was different about Debbie and her situation that enabled her to assert her independence and create her own interpretation of her role?

There are at least three possible explanations. The first relates to Debbie's age and additional experience. She was 10 years older than most student teachers, who go to the university immediately after high school. Before Debbie entered the university full time, she was married, had a child who was now 10 years old, and had worked as an

aide and a counselor in a learning laboratory (refer to Figure 2).

Figure 2

ROLE ADAPTATIONS



She had acquired the additional roles of "wife," "mother," "teacher aide," and "counselor" before reaching the university. These added roles, with the resulting increase in maturity, may have given her a greater sense of self and a more clearly defined identity than the other student teachers. Moreover, she was far more experienced in negotiating the often conflicting roles so typical of a spouse, parent, and worker. This experience with conflicting roles, norms and expectations would now serve her well. Debbie was better equipped to mediate the influences around her and assert her own interpretation of how she wanted to act as teacher. Students who enter the university immediately after high school usually do not have a chance to incorporate these additional roles. They enter the transition into the

professional status less mature than the older student and less competent to deal with the contradictions inherent in the student teacher role. This makes them more impressionable and less resistent to superiors' influence.

Debbie also maintained that she had less to lose in taking risks than her peers. She knew that "her world would not collapse" (Interview, 4/6/82) if she did not make it through the ten weeks. She said it would have been very painful, but she was secure in her role as wife and mother, and she could try again. Most of the other student teachers did not know what else to do if they failed.

A second explanation is that Ms. Cathcart gave Debbie complete freedom to design and implement instruction in any way she chose, and essentially left the room for six weeks. Ms. Cathcart was quick to provide assistance with planning and to give negative feedback on her management skills. However, she supported Debbie's desire to learn from her own mistakes and did not interfere when Debbie planned novel experiences. During the six weeks that Debbie was in charge, she was the teacher in the classroom and Ms. Cathcart was rarely present. Though often painful, this freedom enabled Debbie to develop in her own way without fear of retribution from her cooperating teacher. Debbie was aware that her deviation from grammar instruction might result in a mediocre recommendation from Ms. Cathcart. However, she said it was more important to learn from her experience and feel good about it.

The third explanation relates to the influence of this researcher. In a final paper, Debbie wrote that the best thing that happened to her during the term was that I consistently came to observe her teach each week. I was able to watch her "successes and failures," and continually asked questions that challenged both her curriculum decisions and her

perspectives on teaching. The university supervisor, on the other hand, had only observed her three times during the term and had given her feedback, in writing, that she was doing "great". (The supervisor only met with students who were experiencing problems). This kind of feedback was neither helpful nor constructive for Debbie's growth as a professional teacher. It appears that, in the process of doing this study, my consistent presence and form of questioning became a model of credible supervision.

The mystery still remains, however, where Debbie acquired her perception of an educative experience. When I asked her that question during our final interview, she maintained that she did not know. She said that she had not "learned anything" from her English methods courses, and her only education course was a "waste" (Interview, 4/16/82). (This was contrary to my validating informants who spoke of many valuable elementary education courses.) Debbie did refer, however, to several useful projects that she had developed on her own in some methods classes, and to several classes with good professors. Perhaps she learned some teaching techniques from them. Perhaps over time she accumulated intuitions.

The question remains for those involved in research on teaching -- how to get images of good education in peoples' minds? "But that's a psychological question, not an ethnographic one" (Personal Communication, L. Shulman, 5/24/82). Shulman and his collegues at Stanford are now in the process of studying how preservice and first year teachers learn to combine their subject matter knowledge with their growing pedagogical skills.

Implications

Debbie's conflict in her student teaching situation was not unrepresentative of student teachers -- it was more telling. All student teachers engage in some conflict. The dimensions in this case, however, are so clearly observable that one can see clearly what appears more subtle in other situations.

As I reflect back on this study, I am as appalled now as I was then with the lack of appropriate supervision that Debbie received from the system, from either the cooperating teacher or the university supervisor. Here was a student teacher who had everything going for her -- maturity, pa thood, intelligence, and valuable experience as an aide with problem adolescents -- and we almost lost her to the profession. She reported that she would rather quit teaching than be required to teach in a restrictive environment.

Student teaching can be both painful when lessons "flop," and exhilarating when they are successful. It can also be miseducative. As Feiman-Nemser (Nemser, 1983) has said:

> While it may give future teachers a taste of reality, student teaching can also foster bad habits and narrow vision. What helps to solve an immediate problem may not be good teaching. A deceptive sense of success, equated with keeping order and discipline, is liable to close off avenues for further learning (p.156).

One of the important lessons of this case is that such scholars as Nemser (1983) and Lortie (1975) tell only half of the tale when they call our attention to the conservative influence of prior experience on those learning to teach. In Debbie's case, her mature commitment and capacity to adapt conserved her excellent pedagogical intuitions in the face of conventional and dull dispositions of her cooperating teacher and absent university supervisor.

Not all prior experience is the same; not all prior experience conserves the conventional and impedes change. We must become as alert and sensitive to the variations in ideology and experience that novice teachers bring to teacher education, as we are to those brought by pupils to other learning experiences.

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